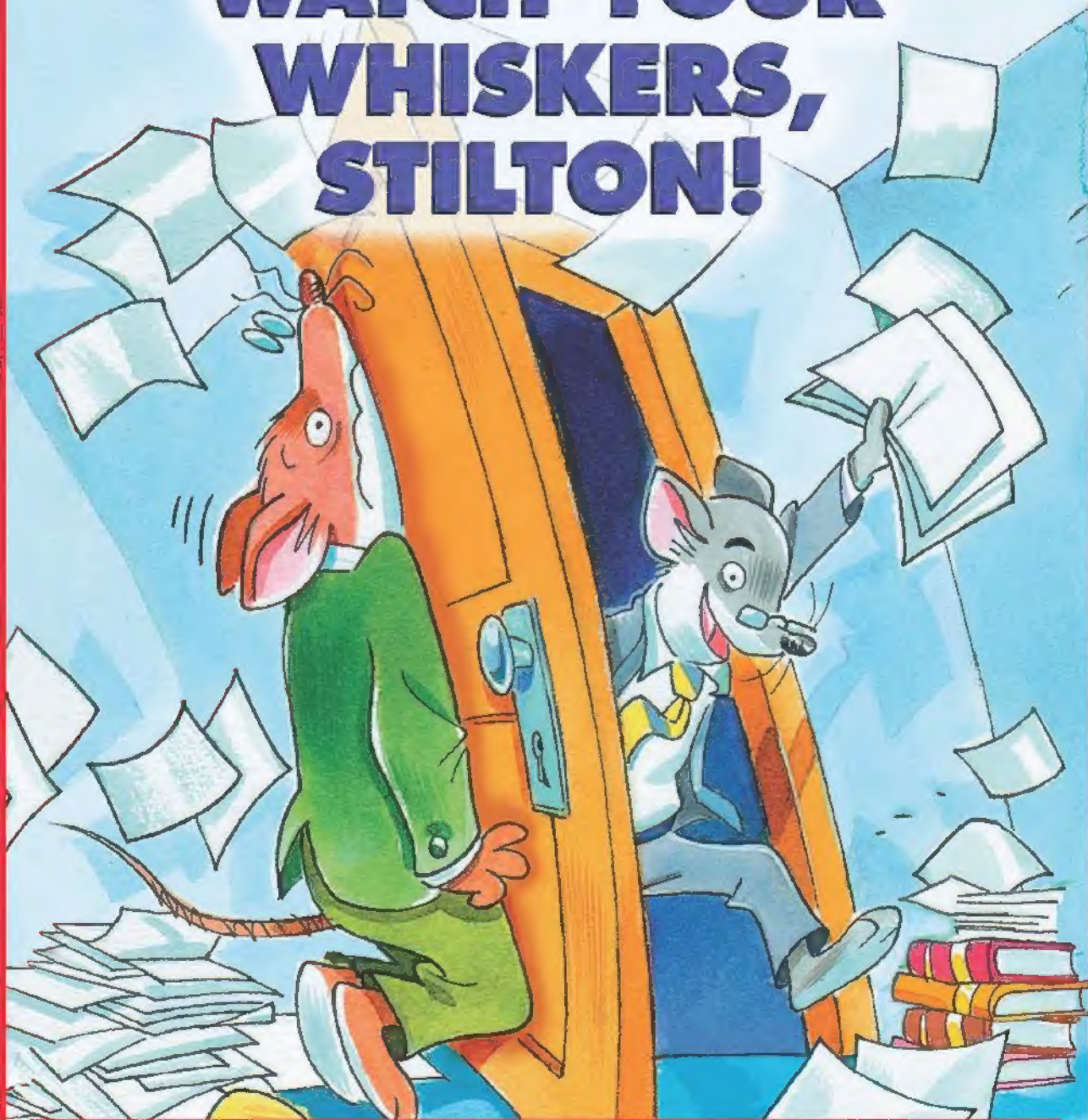




# Geronimo Stilton

## WATCH YOUR WHISKERS, STILTON!



# SCHOLASTIC



Dear mouse friends,  
Welcome to the world of



Geronimo Stilton







THE RODENT'S GAZETTE  
EDITORIAL STAFF







**Geronimo Stilton**

A learned and brainy  
mouse; editor of  
*The Rodent's Gazette*



**Thea Stilton**

Geronimo's sister and  
special correspondent at  
*The Rodent's Gazette*



**Trap Stilton**

An awful joker;  
Geronimo's cousin and  
owner of the store  
Cheap Junk for Less



**Benjamin Stilton**

A sweet and loving  
nine-year-old mouse;  
Geronimo's favorite  
nephew

# Geronimo Stilton

**WATCH YOUR  
WHISKERS, STILTON!**



Scholastic Inc.

New York   Toronto   London   Auckland   Sydney  
Mexico City   New Delhi   Hong Kong   Buenos Aires

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[www.geronimostilton.com](http://www.geronimostilton.com)

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# THE ROARING RAT

It was a sunny July morning. The sun was so **HOT**, you could grill a cheese sandwich on the sidewalk.

I went to have breakfast at the **corner** diner (as usual). I ordered a coffee and a **CHEESE DANISH** (as usual). Then I went to the newsstand (as usual). I wanted to get a **freshly printed** copy of my newspaper . . .





. . . oh, but I haven't told you yet. My name is Stilton, *Geronimo Stilton*. I run **The Rodent's Gazette**. It's the most popular newspaper here on Mouse Island.

As I was saying, I went to get a copy of my newspaper (as usual). But something *unusual* was going on. I could not find a copy of the paper. Not a single one!

I was so puzzled, I had to ask the newsdealer about it. "Excuse me, **INKYPAWS**," I said. "I am looking for my usual copy of **The Rodent's Gazette**."

**INKYPAWS** looked uncomfortable. He scratched his whiskers. "Er...um...I don't have one!" he said.

Now I was even more puzzled. "Why not? Are you sold out?"

**INKYPAWS** shook his head. He stared at his





paws. “Mr. Stilton, the truth is . . . I do not sell *The Rodent’s Gazette* anymore!” he blurted out.

I couldn’t believe my big mouse ears. “Since when?”

**INKYPAWS** pointed to the piles of newspapers. They all had the same title on the masthead — **THE ROARING RAT!**

“A **ONE-EYED** rat came by this morning,” he explained. “He offered me an enormous amount of money to sell nothing but *The Roaring Rat*. Then he took away all the copies of *The Rodent’s Gazette*.”

I stared at **INKYPAWS**, unable to squeak.

“I’m sorry, Mr. Stilton,” **INKYPAWS**





said. "Business is business!" He waved a check in front of my snout. It was from *The Roaring Rat*. And it had more zeroes than a hunk of Swiss has holes.

**"THIS STINKS WORSE THAN A MOUND OF MOLDY CHEESE!"**

I fumed. I grabbed a copy of *The Roaring Rat*. I wanted to see what this one-eyed rat was up to.

As I read the front-page story, my whiskers started to twitch.

## THE ROARING RAT

### STILTON'S PAPER IS ON THE WAY OUT!

The Rodent's Gazette is going broke! The Roaring Rat has learned that newsstands will no longer sell the newspaper. Bookstores will not sell

books by Stilton Publishing. Keep reading *The Roaring Rat* to get the whole story. You won't miss *The Rodent's Gazette*—we promise!







# A ONE-EYED RAT

I **hurried** to the office as fast as my paws could take me. I had to find out what was going on!

On the way, I passed a bookstore. I looked in the window (as usual). There is always a copy of my latest book displayed there.

But this was not a usual morning. My latest book was not in the window. I ran inside. I searched high and low, but I could not find a *single book* by my company, Stilton Publishing. Instead, all of the books came from a new



*Bat about  
Books*



company — The Roaring Rat Group!

*Batsabout Books*, the owner of the store, looked nervous to see me. Batsabout is a little **snobby**, but he has always been happy to sell my books.

“I take it you’ve heard the news, Mr. Stilton,” he squeaked. “I’m sorry, but I can no longer sell books from Stilton Publishing. I received a proposal from a one-eyed rat early this morning. . . .”

Batsabout showed me a check from The Roaring Rat Group. This one had so many zeroes, it made me dizzy. I turned *AS PALE AS A PIECE OF MOZZARELLA*. Then I left the store without a word.

“This is much worse than I thought,” I muttered. I hurried to 17 Swiss Cheese Center. My whiskers were **TREMBLING**. I rushed into my office. Then I screamed for my secretary.

*Mouse llll a a a a a a a a a a ! ! ! ! !*





*I screamed for my secretary.*



## WHO IS THIS MYSTERIOUS RAT?

The entire staff of my newspaper came running into my office. They were all squeaking at once.

“Mr. Stilton? Did you hear the news?”

“Every newsstand on the island is carrying only *The Roaring Rat!*”

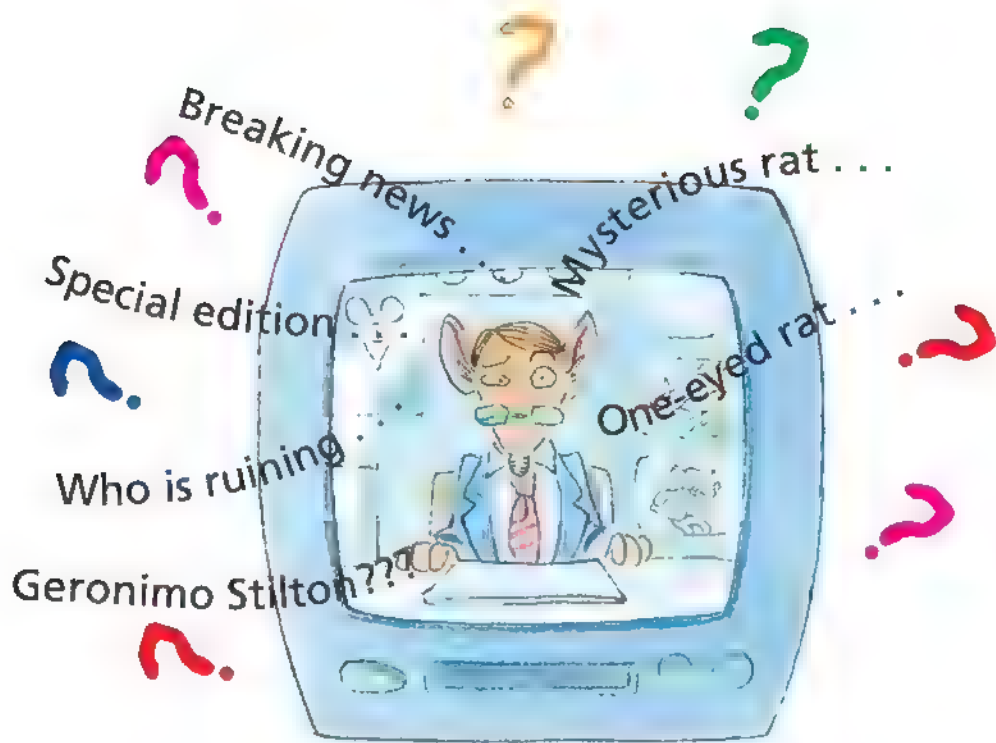
“Every bookstore is selling only books by The Roaring Rat Group!”

I sank into my chair. “This means things are much, much worse than I thought!” I cried.

I needed more information. I turned on the television. **Walter Newsynose**, the famous reporter on New Mouse Island, was giving a special edition report.

“We have breaking news,” Walter said.





“This morning, a mysterious one-eyed rat went to every newsstand and bookstore on Mouse Island. The rat claimed to be the owner of The Roaring Rat Group. He bought every book and paper by Stilton Publishing and had them sent to the **RECYCLING CENTER**. Who is this mysterious rat who is ruining Geronimo Stilton?”

My whiskers **quivered**. My tail trembled. I jumped out of my seat.

“Putrid cheese puffs!” I yelled. “This is much, much, *much* worse than I thought!”



# WILLIAM SHORTPAWS, ALSO KNOWN AS CHEAP MOUSE WILLY

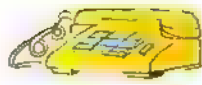
At that moment, the phone **RANG**. I answered it.

“Hello. Is this Stilton, Geronimo Stilton?”

It was *Aunt Sweetfur*, my favorite auntie. When I was a little mouselet, she read bedtime stories to me—“Jack and the Cheese Stick,” “Snow Rat and the Seven Mice,” “Little Red Ratty Hood”—all of the greats.

“Nephew, I have some bad news for you,” Aunt Sweetfur began. “Dreadful news. I don’t know how to put this. It’s about Grandfather William.”

A shiver ran through my fur. Everyone is afraid of my grandfather **William Shortpaws**,



also known as **Cheap Mouse Willy**. He is the founder of *The Rodent's Gazette*. He thinks nobody knows how to run a newspaper but him.

"Aunt Sweetfur,  
tell me the truth," I said.



*Geronimo Stilton*

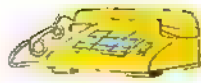


Grandfather William, aka  
**Cheap Mouse Willy**

"Is Grandfather William ill?"

A loud voice roared on the other end of the phone. "**Fat chance!**" It was Grandfather William! "I'm feeling fine, Grandson. But you had better do something right now to save the company! If you don't,





I am coming back to take over Stilton Publishing. Is that clear?”

How was I supposed to save the company from a mysterious one-eyed rat? I started to protest. “**BUT, GRANDFATHER . . .**”

“Stop squeaking and get moving!” Grandfather William yelled. Then he hung up on me.

I felt pretty terrible. This was worse than that time I got cheddar chewing gum stuck in my whiskers. Worse than that time I had the mousles and broke out in red spots all over my fur. Worse than when I had a bad reaction to some overripe Muenster and thought I was allergic to cheese.

I started to sob. Soon my snout was soaked with **TEARS**. “This means things are much, much, much, much worse than I thought!”

**I started to sob**



# THAT'S HITTING BELOW THE BELT!

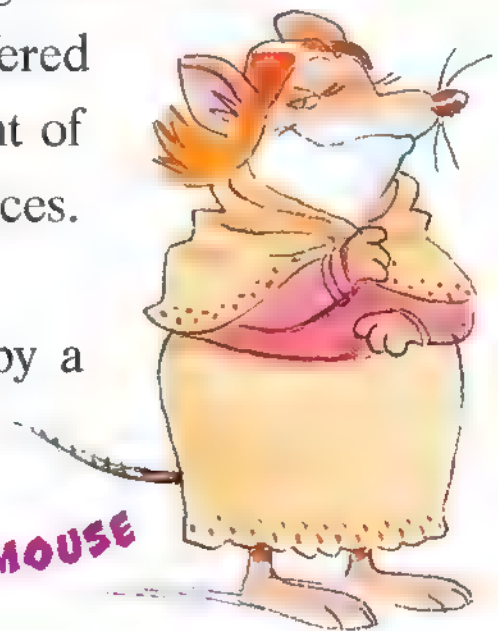
The phone rang again. This time it was **LEONA MISERMOUSE**. She is the owner of **17 Swiss Cheese Center**.

She is very rich, but she hates to spend any money. She reminds me of Grandfather William.

“Good morning, Mr. Stilton,” Leona began. She sounded nervous. “I’m afraid I must ask you to leave the building. This morning a one-eyed rat offered me an **ENORMOUSE** amount of money to rent out your offices. Of course, I said yes.”

I felt like I had been hit by a cheese truck. “**WHAT?**”

**LEONA MISERMOUSE**





Are you kicking us out of the building?”

“I’m ever so sorry,” said Leona. But she didn’t sound sorry. “I would like you to leave as soon as possible. The new owner’s furniture will be there **THIS AFTERNOON.**”

“This afternoon!” I squeaked louder than a mouse whose tail has been run over by a cheese delivery truck. “This is **OUTRAGEOUS!**”

My anger did not seem to bother Leona Misermouse. “Business is business, Mr. Stilton,” she said. “The owner of *The Roaring Rat* offered me so much money, I couldn’t say no.”

I hung up the phone. I fell back into my chair. I thumped my snout on my desk.

“Things are much, much, much, much, much worse than I thought!” I **moaned.**





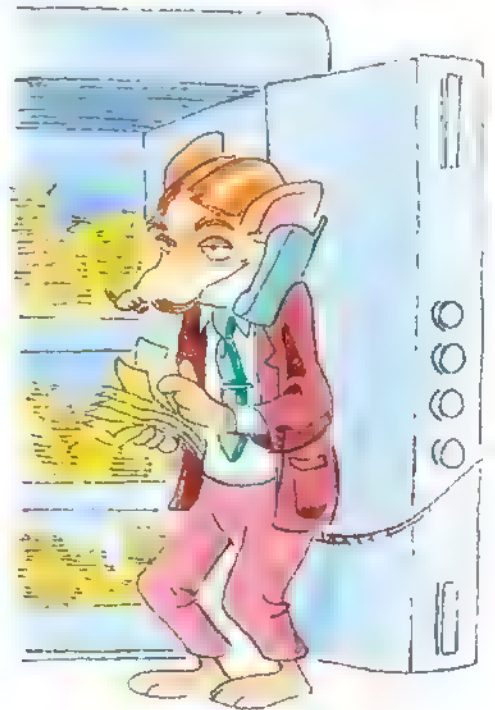
# HE SHOULD BE ASHAMED OF HIMSELF!

The phone rang again. I picked it up.  
“**WHAT NOW?**” I squeaked. I just knew it had to be more bad news.

I was right. On the other end was **Ledger Moneymouse**. He is the manager of Ratlay’s Bank. *The Rodent’s Gazette* borrows a lot of money from Ratlay’s.

I knew what was coming. “I bet you are going to tell me that you are **calling in** all of our loans,” I said.

Moneymouse squeaked in surprise. “**Yes!**”



**Ledger Moneymouse**



I kept going. “And I bet you’re going to tell me you’re sorry, but we can’t borrow money from you anymore.”

**“Yes! Yes!”**

I went on. “And I bet you’re going to tell me that Ratlay’s Bank was bought by a one-eyed rat.”

**“Yes! Yes! Yes!”** Moneymouse shouted.

I shouted right back at him. “Tell him he is not playing fair! He should be ashamed of himself. Whoever he is!”

I slammed down the phone. My whiskers were drooping. My paws were **shaking**.

“This means things are much, much, much, much, much, much worse than I thought!” I wailed.



# WE ARE IN BIG TROUBLE!

I couldn't take the stress anymore. Things were moving fast. **TOO FAST**. Faster than a hamster on a treadmill. Faster than being chased by a cat. Faster than New Mouse City's annual rat race!

**I FAINTED**. Mousella took a piece of blue cheese and **waved** it under my nose. The strong smell woke me up. I could hear my staff members muttering.

"Who is this mysterious rat?"

"Why does he want to ruin  
*The Rodent's  
Gazette?*"

I came to  
my senses.







DUSTY DUSTWELL

What kind of a mouse was I? My staff needed me. I had to be strong.

**“QUIET!”** I shouted.

Everyone stared at me.

“It’s true. We are in big trouble,” I said.

“But that just means we have to be strong. We have to stay calm. There is a solution for every problem. We will get through this!”

Everyone cheered. Then **DUSTY DUSTWELL**, the cleaning lady, spoke up. “Great speech, Mr. Stilton. So what do we do now?”

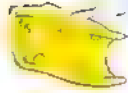
I smoothed my fur. I wiggled my ears. I cleared my throat. I opened my mouth to speak . . . and burst into tears!

I wailed.

about me.

“Poor Mr. Stilton!”





“After all he has **DONE** for the company.”

“What will Cheap Mouse Willy have to say about this?”

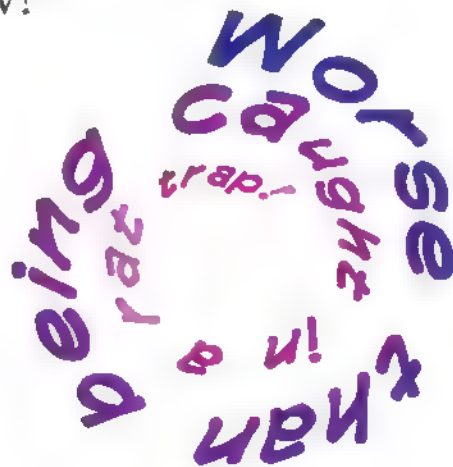
“I am sure he will do something **TERRIBLE** to Geronimo!”

“This is worse than a hunk of Swiss cheese with no holes!”

“Worse than being caught in a rat trap!”

“Worse than a cheeseburger with no cheese!”

“Slimy Swiss rolls, I’m glad I’m not in Mr. Stilton’s fur right now!”







# MOUSE TEARS

The door to my office flew open. My sister, Thea, **burst** into the room. She is the special correspondent for *The Rodent's Gazette*. She held my favorite nephew, Benjamin, by the paw.

"Gerry Berry!" she yelled. "Dry those tears! This is no time for sniveling! You must do something! Now!"

Benjamin ran up to me. He kissed the tip of my snout. "Yes, Uncle Geronimo. You must do something

**RIGHT NOW!**  
Before it's too late!"

I squeezed my



tear-soaked pawkerchief. A salty puddle had formed at my feet. “But what can I do?” I sobbed.

Thea scolded me. “Shame on you, **GERONIMO**. Snap out of it! You can’t let the company go down without a fight!”

Thea was right. I wiped my whiskers. Then I turned to my staff.

“Friends,” I began, choking back tears. “We have known one another for a long time. We have shared **good times** and **bad times** here at *The Rodent’s Gazette*. We are a team. Today, I need my team more than ever. Can I count on your help?”

The staff was silent for a moment. Then they all shouted, “**Yessssssssssssss!**”

I knew this was an important moment. I had the staff behind me. We had to do something. It was now or never.

I **GLANCED** at a copy of *The Rodent's Gazette* from the day before. The page was open to the **CLASSIFIEDS**. Out of the corner of my **EYE** I noticed an ad:

**WATCH YOUR WHISKERS...  
HERE COMES SHIF T. PAWS!**

**LOOKING FOR A SOLUTION  
TO POOR DISTRIBUTION?**

**IS BUSINESS SO BAD  
YOU'RE WORRIED AND SAD?**

**CHEER UP! HAVE NO FEAR!  
SHIF T. PAWS IS HERE!**

**WHEN THINGS ARE A MESS  
SHIF T. PAWS IS THE BEST!**

**SHIF T. PAWS! A MOUSE WITH A MISSION**

The ad gave me an idea. I grabbed the paper. Then I waved it in the air like a flag.

"If we can't sell our products in bookstores



and newsstands, we will find some other way to sell them!" I announced. "And I know just the mouse for the job. Our old business manager, Shif T. Paws! I swear on my collection of antique cheese rinds, we will pull through this! Three cheers for *The Rodent's Gazette*!"

The staff let out a shout. "Hurrah! Hurrah! Hurrah! Hurrah for Geronimo Stilton! Hurrah for *The Rodent's Gazette*!"

*Hurrah for The Rodent's Gazette!*





# WHEN YOU GET RIGHT DOWN TO IT...

I called the number in the ad and left a message. Then I waited.

I didn't have to wait long. Five minutes later, I heard a voice outside my door.

"Watch your whiskers. Here comes Shif T. Paws!

**S** is for *Super salesmouse!*

**H** is for *Happy times ahead!*

**I** is for *Improving your business!*

**F** is for *Fast results!*

**T** is for *Time to get moving!*

**P** is for *Put your paws together!*

**A** is for *All is not lost!*

**W** is for *Watch your whiskers!*

**S** is for *Stop your worrying!*

*Shif T. Paws is here!"*



*Watch your whiskers, here comes Shif T. Paws!*



The door flew open. It slammed into my snout, crushing my **whiskers**. I stuck to the door like cheese on pizza. Then I slid to the floor and fainted.

Mousella revived me with more blue cheese. I opened my eyes and saw *the mouse* who had flung the door open.

He was a **tall** rodent wearing a gray suit and striped tie. The top of his head was as round and **FURLESS** as a ball of mozzarella. Wire-rimmed glasses perched on the tip of his snout. Cell phones hung all over him like ornaments on a Christmas tree. He had a **YELLOW** cell phone behind his right ear, a **RED** cell phone in the pocket of his jacket, a **BLUE** one in his shirt pocket, a **GREEN** one in his back pants pocket, and a **PINK** cell phone hung around his neck.





“Shif!” I **CRIED**, bouncing up to my paws.  
“It’s great to see you again.”

You see, Shif T. had worked at *The Rodent’s Gazette* before. In fact, he’d helped me out of a tough spot when my grandfather William



Shortpaws—also known as Cheap Mouse Willy—had **FIRE**d the entire staff. Shif T. had left us a year ago to pursue a business opportunity in R a t z i k i s t a n , selling **i c e** to Eskimice. Only a salesmouse like Shif T. could pull



something like that off. I had no idea he'd come back to New Mouse City, but **finally**, was I glad he had!

"Good morning, Mr. Stilton. It's great to be back," he replied in a loud voice. "You called the right mouse!"

I stepped back, startled. "There is no need to **SHOUT**," I said. "My ears are not stuffed with cheese!"

But Shif T. only got louder. "When you get right down to it, Stilton, how big is the company these days?" he asked.

I started to reply. "Well, we have about—"

He did not wait for me to answer. "When you get right down to it, what is the problem?"

I tried again. "Well, the problem is—"

"When you get right down to it, what is my salary?"

I wasn't sure what to say. "I think—"



“When you get right down to it, double your offer and I can start right now. Where’s my office? Ah, that way . . . I guessed as much. I’ll be right back!”

Before I could think, Shif T. grabbed the blue cheese from Mousella.

“**Blue cheese!** My favorite!” he squeaked. Then he turned and ran out of my office. I heard him yell as he scurried down the hall.

“**Watch your whiskers,** here comes



Shif T. Paws! I’m running the show here now! So move your tails, everyone! *It’s selling time!*”



“That Shif T. Paws is a born salesmouse,” Mousella whispered. “You are lucky to have him, Mr. Stilton.”

“Do you think so?” I asked. I really wasn’t sure!

*Mousella MacMouser*





*I jumped.*

“We need to sell. Sell, sell, sell. S-E-L-L! Get it?” he shouted.

**"SEEEEEEEEEEELL!"**

He paused. Then he announced his plan.



COME ON,



IT'S SELLING TIME!

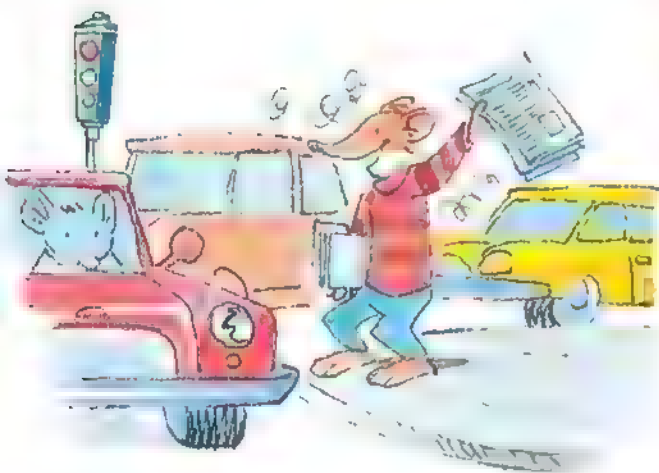


### **FIRST TARGET:**

**Supermarkets and shopping malls!**

We will stand at all the entrances and sell papers to the rodents while they shop!

*We will stand outside supermarkets!*



### **SECOND TARGET:**

**Roads!**

We will stand at traffic lights and sell to rats in their cars!

*We will sell papers at traffic lights!*



### THIRD TARGET:

**Train and subway stations!**

We will stand at train and subway stations **24-7**. We can sell books and newspapers to rodents on the go.



*We will go to the train stations!*

### FOURTH TARGET:

**Door-to-door!**

We will knock on the door of every house and apartment in New Mouse City with hot-off-the-press copies of *The Rodent's Gazette*!



*We will knock on doors!*

COME ON,



IT'S SELLING TIME!



*We will go to the beaches!*

### **FIFTH TARGET:**

#### **Beaches!**

Rodents getting their fur tanned need to read, too! We will go to all of the beaches on Mouse Island to sell our books and newspapers!



*We will stand outside movie theaters!*

### **SIXTH TARGET:**

#### **Movie theaters!**

We will sell to rodents as they come and go to the movies!



Shif T.'s **EYES** shone behind his glasses. "Are you all with me? Come on, it's selling time!" he yelled.

The staff was silent for a moment. They all **LOOKED** at one another.

Then they cried out, "**HURRAH** for Shif T. Paws!"

"That's the spirit!" Shif T. **shouted**. "We will save *The Rodent's Gazette*!"

Everyone cheered. Then Shif T. suddenly looked upset.

"Crusty keypads!" Shif T. **shrieked**. "I've lost my favorite cell phone!"

The salesmouse **RAN** out of the room. I stepped forward. I wanted to inspire my staff the way Shif T. Paws had.

"Friends—" I began.

But a cry rang out. "Watch your whiskers, Shif T. Paws is here!"





Shif T. ran back into the office, pushing open the door. Once again, it **slammed** into me. I was as flat as a slice of American cheese. I slid to the floor.

“Good news, Stilton,” Shif T. said. “I found my **cell phone**. I left it in the bathroom.”

Luckily, Mousella had another piece of blue cheese. The smell worked instantly.

I stood up.





Shif T. Paws gave the microphone to Kreamy O'Cheddar.

She is the editor in chief of the newspaper. She is also a *good friend*.

"I would like to make an announcement," she said. "The staff of *The Rodent's Gazette* will give up their vacation time so we can work to save the newspaper."

I was so *moved* ! I secretly wiped a tear from my eye.

Kreamy went on. "We have also agreed to



*Kreamy O'Cheddar*



**work for free** until these tough times are over.”

Shif T. Paws slapped me on the back.

“We will pull through, Stilton,” he said.



“When you get right down to it, we will save the **paper**.

I’ll stake my fur on it—or

***MY NAME ISN'T SHIF T. PAWS!***”



# MY FUR FELT FRIED!

Shif T. Paws took back the microphone. “We need to find new offices right away. Any ideas?”

Mousella spoke up. “My cousin is a baker,” she said. “His name is **Bagel Buckwheat**. He has a large basement at 85 Curds Court. We could move the business there for now.”

Shif T. looked pleased.

**“EXCELLENT!”** he said. “We will all meet at eleven o’clock tonight at 85 Curds Court. Now,



**Bagel Buckwheat**



everyone come and take a pile of books and papers. Move those tails! It's selling time!"

Everyone took their piles and headed out to enact Shif T.'s plan. Everyone but Thea, that is. She was sitting at the computer, **surfing the Net**. I could tell by the look on her face that she had an idea.

Before I could ask her about it, Shif T. hung a sack of newspapers around my shoulders. Then he stuffed a **huge pile** of books into my paws.



“Move your tail, Stilton!” he squeaked. “We need to sell every last copy before tonight! It’s selling time!”

I started to protest. “But—”

Shif T. Paws pushed me out the door. “See you at eleven, Stilton!”

I left the building, *shaking my head*. It was hard to argue with Shif T. Paws.

I found a good selling spot at the corner of Limburger Lane and Parmesan Place. I stood right next to the traffic light.



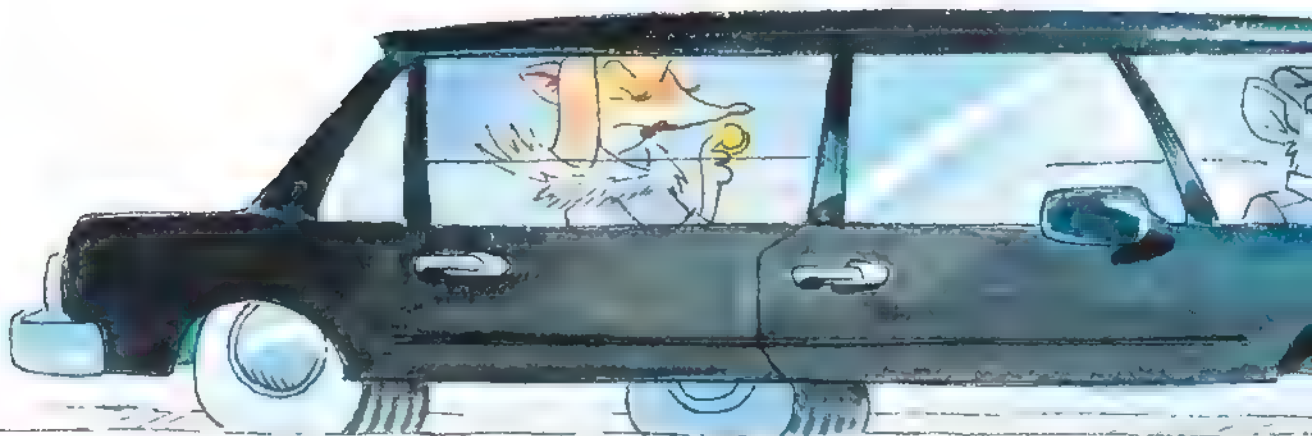
When drivers stopped at the **red light**, I would shout, “Papers! Get the latest news **fresh** off the press!”

Cheese niblets, I had a tough time! It was so hot that all of the drivers had their **air conditioners** on and their windows shut. Most of them pretended not to see me.

I tried pushing the books. “**Books for sale!** Nothing beats a good book on a hot summer day!”

But only a few people stopped to buy anything.

The day dragged on. It got hotter and hotter.



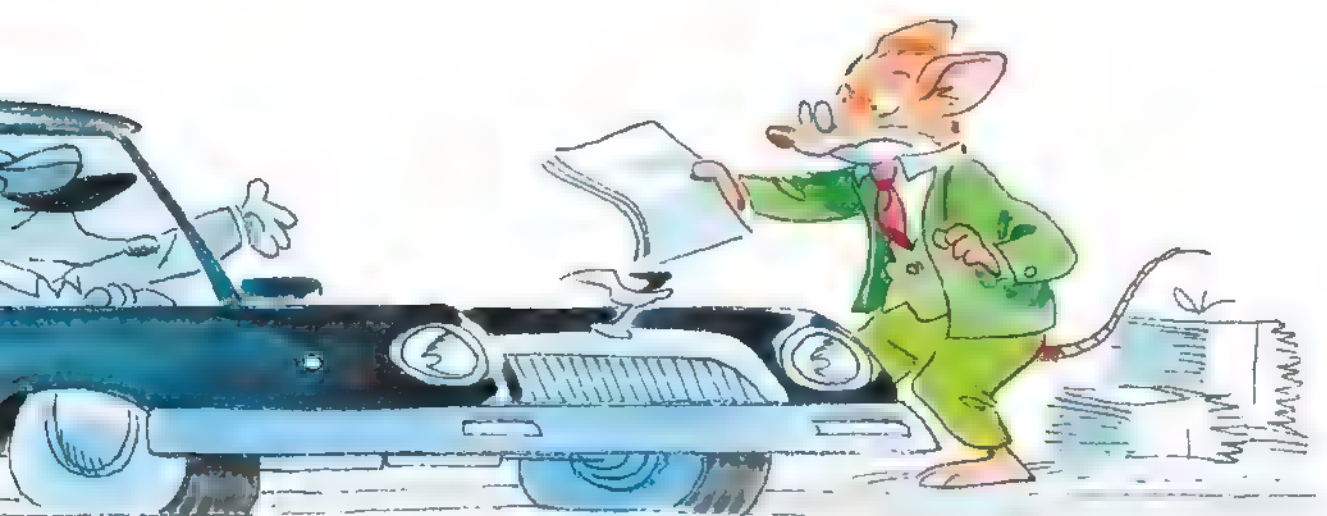
My fur felt **FRIED**. And I had forgotten to put sunscreen on my snout!

I felt like giving up. I was about to walk away when a long, *fancy* car pulled up. Riding in the back were several female mice. I recognized one of them—the snobby Mrs. Edward S. Smugrat III.

I heard Mrs. Smugrat **whisper**, “Isn’t that Stilton, Geronimo Stilton?”

“Oh, it’s him all right!” one of her friends replied. “I hear he is ruined! It all happened in one morning! Can you believe it?”

Mrs. Smugrat handed a large coin to her





driver and whispered something. He rolled down the window, examined me **UP** and **DOWN**, then gave the money to me.

“Give me a copy of the newspaper,” he said.  
“And keep the change!”

I **BLUSHED** with embarrassment.

But then I realized I shouldn't be embarrassed. I was just trying to save my newspaper, by cheddar!

I straightened my tail and took the coin. That's one more copy sold, I thought.

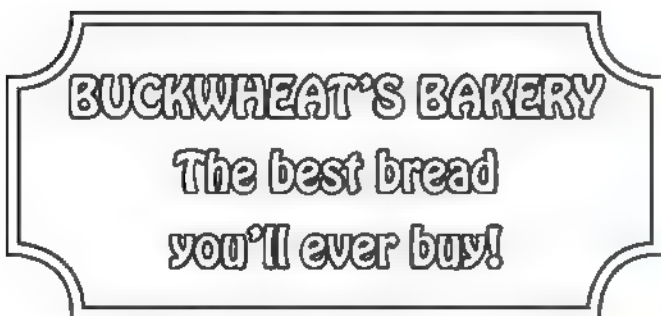
I felt better after that. I decided to keep going. “Papers! Papers! Get the latest news

*fresh off the press!”*



# LIFE IS BEAUTIFUL

By the time evening fell, my snout was **SUNBURNED**. My paws were covered with blisters from standing all day. My spirits were low. And I was as hungry as a jumbo-size cat. All I wanted to do was go home and curl up with a cream cheese smoothie. But Shif T. Paws had called that eleven o'clock meeting. I couldn't let down my staff. So I **dragged** myself to 85 Curds Court. I saw the baker's sign on the building:





I walked inside and found myself in a basement. The smell of freshly baked bread filled my snout.

A small rodent with **TWINKLING** eyes came toward me. He shook my paw.

“Hi there, Boss,” he said in a friendly voice. “I’m Bagel Buckwheat. I hear business **isn’t** so good.”

“My name is Stilton, *Geronimo Stilton*,” I said. “I’m very grateful for your help. We are going through a tough time. But I’m sure we’ll pull through.”

Bagel slapped me on the shoulder. He left a white **FLOUR** pawprint on my sleeve.

“Of course you’ll pull through, Boss!” he said cheerfully. “Never give up, that’s what I always say. Keep hanging on and things will work out. You can stay here as long as you need. Which reminds me. I’m not rich, but



*The smell of freshly baked bread filled my snout.*





but if you ever need a *small loan . . .*”

I shook my head, touched. What a nice mouse!

Bagel gave me a closer look and frowned. “Boss, you’re looking a little **PALE**. Have you eaten today?”

Before I could answer, he pulled out a tray from one of the ovens. Then he handed me a piece of French bread covered with melted cheese.

“Have a good munch, and life will look a lot **better**,” Bagel said. “My cheese bread is guaranteed to bring a smile to your snout!”

“Thank you,” I said. “You are very **kind**.”

“No need to thank me,” Bagel said. “I’m happy to help. Now, eat up while the bread is still **HOT!**”

I took a bite and licked my whiskers. That cheese bread was delicious!



# I'M TOO FOND OF MY TAIL!

The whole staff arrived for the meeting. We gathered around **PILES OF FLOUR SACKS**. Bagel handed out cheese bread to everyone.

Shif T. Paws was standing on a sack, adding up the day's sales.

"Nifty!" he squeaked. "You all did well." Then he jumped down. "We need a big pile of cash to get the publishing house back on its paws. But don't worry. I have **AN IDEA.**"

Shif T. slapped me





on the shoulders. “Now it’s your turn, Stilton!”

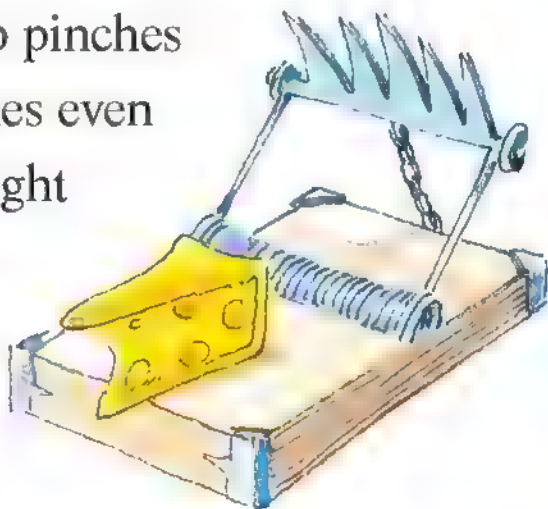
“What do you mean, my turn?” I asked, puzzled.

He winked at me. “Stilton, do you know the television game show called **THE MOUSETRAP?**”

I nodded. *The Mousetrap* is a **GAME SHOW** with a spooky theme. I try not to watch it. I’m a bit of a ‘fraidy mouse, you see, and spooky things give me nightmares!

“Well, then you know it takes place at midnight,” Shif T. continued. “The player sits in a mousetrap. When he or she gives the wrong answer, the trap pinches his or her tail . . . sometimes even **CHOPS IT OFF!** Right then and there, on live TV!”

I shuddered. “What





does this have to do with *me*?”

Shif T. smiled widely. “Because YOU are the next contestant, Stilton!”

**PUTRID CHEESE PUFFS!** I shrieked. “No way! Never! I’m too fond of my tail!”

I tried to flee, but Shif T. grabbed my tail. “Now, Stilton, don’t disappoint me,” he said. “You asked me to save this publishing company and I will. But I can’t do it alone. I’m just asking for a small favor.”

I **stamped** my paw. “Small favor? This is a big deal! I could lose my tail!”

“Or you could win a million dollars,” Shif T. pointed out.

I paused. A million dollars would solve all of our problems. We desperately needed that money.

*“But why does it have to be meeee?”*







*“But why does it have to be meeee?”*  
I wailed nervously.

Mousella stepped up. “Nobody here is as smart as you are, Mr. Stilton. You know a little something about everything! If anyone can win on **THE MOUSETRAP**, it’s you!”

I sighed. I hated to admit it, but Mousella was right. I am a **brainy** mouse.

“Now things are **much**, much, much, much, much, much, much, much worse than I

Gazette! I'll do it for The Rodent's



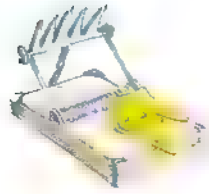
thought!” I cried. “But I have no choice. I’ll do it. I’ll do it for *The Rodent’s Gazette*!”

Shif T. Paws let out a cheer. “Well done, Stilton. We’ll make a **MILLION**! By the way, you are going on tonight’s show. Are you ready? Are you?”

But I didn’t hear him. It’s a good thing Mousella always has blue cheese nearby!

I HAD FAINTED AGAIN.





# THE MOUSETRAP

Who can blame me for fainting again? *The Mousetrap* is very dangerous. Besides, I'm a very **shy** mouse. The idea of going on a live game show, in front of millions of rodents, made my fur stand on end.

Bagel gave me another piece of **HOT** cheese bread to cheer me **up**. He tucked a third into my jacket pocket. "You never know," he said. "You may get hungry later."

But I didn't feel like eating. My tummy was doing flip-flops. Shif T. Paws dragged me out of the bakery and drove me to the television studio. I think he was **AFRAID** I would try to run away at the last minute. I hate to say it, but he was right!

We pulled up in front of the **Top TV** studios.



It was almost midnight, and stars shone in the night sky. We stepped out of the car, and an assistant came to greet us.

“Which one of you is the contestant?” he asked.

“Uh...I am,” I said nervously.

He shook my paw. “It’s an honor to meet you. You must be a very brave mouse to appear on a dangerous **GAME SHOW** like *The Mousetrap*!”



I did not feel like a very brave mouse. My tail trembled as the assistant led us into the studio. He took us to the host of the show, **Vlad Torturetail**. He was a pale-looking mouse with pointed teeth. He wore a **BLACK** suit, a white silk shirt, and a red cape over his shoulders....





He looked a lot like a vampire rat!



## Vlad Torturetail

Torturetail looked me over. “So, are you tonight’s victim—I mean, contestant?” he asked in a **CREEPY** voice. “I hope you are not too fond of your tail. Heh, heh, heh.”

I *TURNED PALE*. I tried to sneak toward



the exit, but Shif T. Paws pulled me **back**.

“Stilton, don’t give up now!” he said.  
“Think of your company! Think of your staff!”

“All I can think about is my **poor tail!**”  
I wailed.

Shif T. lowered his voice. “Come on, Stilton. What’s more important? Your tail or *The Rodent’s Gazette*?”

“Good question,” I replied. “Let me go **think** about that and I’ll get back to you.”

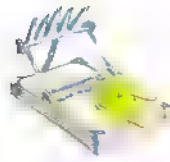
I tried to slip away again, but this time Torturetail grabbed me. By the tail!

“You can’t escape,” he  
hissed. “The studio doors  
are locked. **THE TRAP  
IS READY!**”



I gulped.

“Twenty seconds to go, Stilton,”



Torturetail cackled. “Keep your cool, or you’ll lose your tail!” Then he laughed that creepy laugh of his again. “Heh, heh, heh, heh, heh!”

*“Heh, heh, heh, heh, heh!”*



# GOOD LUCK, STILTON!

Suddenly, the lights in the studio went out.  
A big grandfather clock began striking the  
hours.

One . . . two . . . three . . . four . . . five . . . six . . . seven . . . eight . . . nine . . . ten . . . eleven . . .  
... twelve. Twelve strokes. It was midnight!

The lights came back on. I blinked. Two  
sturdy rats grabbed me.

“Your hour has come, Stilton!” they growled.

They dragged me toward a huge mousetrap.  
It looked like every rodent’s worst nightmare.  
But I didn’t try to fight them. It was too late  
to turn back now!

Behind me, Shif T. Paws called out,



## ***“GOOD LUCK, STILTON!”***

“I’ll need it,” I squeaked weakly.

*Stay calm, Geronimo, I told myself. Do it for The Rodent’s Gazette!*

The rats slipped my tail under the spring in the trap. They put my paws in chains. Now it was *definitely* too late to turn back!

Vlad Torturetail came out holding a microphone. “Meet tonight’s victim—I mean, contestant—Mr. Geronimo Stilton from New Mouse City!”

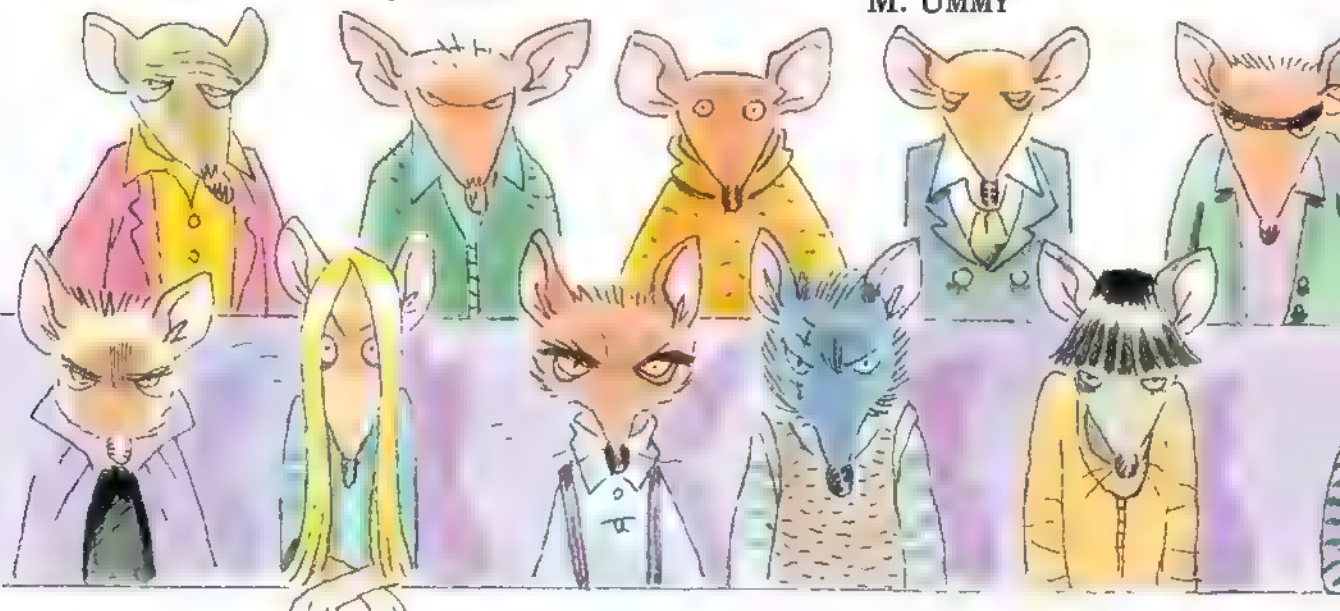
C. E. METERY

S. PECTRE

G. HOST

M. UMMY

C. ORPSE



G. RAVE

C. RYPT

T. OMBSTONE

F. RANKENSTEIN

V. AMPIRE



# MIND YOUR TAIL, STILTON!

I **STUDIED** the members of the game show jury. They had such strange names . . . and **SPOOKY SNOUTS!**

Torturetail glared at me. “Tell us, Mr. Stilton. What do you do for a living?”

I cleared my throat. “Er, I am a publisher

C. OFFIN

M. ONSTER

G. H. OUL

S. CARY



C. REEPLY

D. RACULA

S. H. IVER

B. ONES

H. OWL



and an author. I run the most popular newspaper in New Mouse City, *The Rodent's Gazette*."

The game show host snickered. "I have heard that business is not so good lately, Mr. Stilton," he said. "Is that why you are playing our little game? Do you need the money? Or are you just desperate? Heh, heh, heh."

I **blushed**. What kind of a question was that? I looked at Shif T. Paws. He gave me two thumbs up and mouthed the words **ONE MILLION DOLLARS**.

I felt a little more confident. "The reason I am playing this game is **strictly** personal," I answered. "I prefer to keep it to myself, if you don't mind."

Torturetail snarled. He was disappointed that he hadn't rattled me. "Of course," he



ONE MILLION DOLLARS!



said. “Let’s move on to the questions. You know by now that a wrong answer will release the spring on the mousetrap. When the trap falls, it will pinch your tail—or even chop it off!”

I **shuddered**. My whiskers were quivering uncontrollably.

The audience just laughed.

A big, stocky rat with coal-black fur and very **muscular** arms began to pound a gong.

“**DUM, DUM, DUM, DUM...**”

I could feel the excitement in the room begin to **rise**. The audience was on the



edge of their seats. I looked into the control room and saw the director rubbing his paws together with **GLEE**.

*I realized that the ratings were probably going up!*

Every rodent on Mouse Island was probably tuned in to see me **LOSE MY TAIL**.

“Here is the first question, Stilton,” Torturetail howled. “Mind your tail! Heh, heh, heh, heh, heh!”





*Mind your tail, Stilton!*



# ARE YOU SURE YOU'RE READY, MR. STILTON?

"Are you **ready**, Mr. Stilton?" Torturetail asked.

I took a deep breath. "Yes," I said. "I'm **ready**."

"Are you sure you're **ready**, Mr. Stilton?" Torturetail asked again.

"Yes, thank you," I said again. "I'm **ready**."

He: "**Ready, ready, ready?**"

Me: "Yes, **very ready**."

He: "Are you sure?"

Me: "Yes, I'm sure!"

He: "Are you very, very sure?"

Me: "I said I'm sure!"

He: "Can I start with the first question?"



Me: "YES!"

He: "You know, you still don't look ready to me."

Me: "I am ready!"

He: "You're looking a little **pale**. . . ."

Me: "I am **NOT pale**!"

He: "I see some sweat on your whiskers. You seem upset."

I couldn't take any more of this. "Please, please, ask the question!" I begged.

Torturetail seemed pleased. He had gotten me all **STRESSED OUT**—which was his plan all along, of course.

"The first question is *very, very easy*, Mr. Stilton," he said.

**Squeeeeeeeek!!!**





“*Really* easy . . . but only if you know the answer! Heh, heh, heh.”

The members of the jury laughed **MEANLY**. I wiped the sweat off my whiskers and tried to relax.

“First question,” Torturetail said in a serious voice. “Can you tell us the original meaning of the word . . . *Halloween*?”



**HALLOWEEN?**

The **black** rat began to beat the drum again. Dum . . .  
dum . . . dum . . .

This was an easy one for me! I had recently published a book called *It's Halloween, You 'Fraidy Mouse* that included a brief history of Halloween. So I cleared my throat. “Actually, yes, I can tell you. Halloween is an old Celtic word. The Celts from northern Europe



were the first to celebrate Halloween. They danced around *fires*, wearing masks.” I paused dramatically. “Therefore, the word *Halloween* comes from All Hallows’ Eve!”

“Is that your final answer?” Torturetail asked me. His beady eyes seemed to pierce through my fur.

“Yes,” I said confidently.

“Are you sure?” he asked again in a menacing voice.

“I am quite sure,” I said.

Torturetail seemed disappointed. He *shook* his head. “The answer is . . . *correct*!”

The jury began to jeer.

“*B O O O O O O O O O !*”

I realized they were disappointed, too. They wanted to see blood. My blood!





...MUMMY

Torturetail asked the second question. “What is the name of the substance used by the **ANCIENT EGYPTIANS** to preserve dead bodies? It also gave us the word . . . *mummy*.”

At first, I **thought** my tail was lost. I could not think of the answer. The drum boomed in the background. Dum . . . dum . . . dum . . . Then I remembered an adventure I had in Egypt. I wrote about it in *The Curse of the Cheese Pyramid*. I smiled.

“I am sure the name is *mum*,” I said. “It was a sticky mixture of bitumen, myrrh, and other substances used to preserve dead bodies.”

Torturetail scowled. “Correct!” he howled.




The jury jeered again.

"B O O O O O O O O O !"

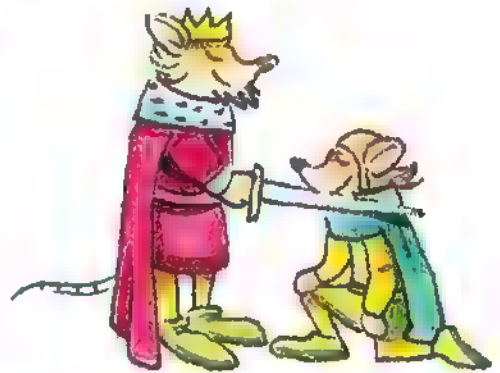
"B O O O O O O O O !"

Offstage, Shif T. Paws shot me a big grin. Things were going well. I still had my tail. And it hadn't even been pinched yet!

“Third question!” Torturetail shrieked.  
“What is the name of the  
legendary king who led  
the **Knights of the Rat  
Table?**”



This one was *very* easy. My aunt Sweetfur read me stories of the knights when I was just a wee mouselet. “King Ratthur!” I replied.



# King Ratthur

Torturetail scowled. “Correct again!”



The jury **BOOED** me once more. Then they began to mutter among themselves.

"These questions are much too easy!"

"They promised us blood, but so far they haven't even pinched his tail!"

"That Stilton is as sharp as a block of cheddar!"

I smiled under my whiskers. Torturetail looked **miserable**. He read the fourth question.

"What is the name of the Irish writer who wrote the famous book *Dracula* in 1897?"

"Bram Mouser!" I answered immediately.

Torturetail mumbled under his whiskers. "Correct."



**DRACULA**



“B O O O O O O O O ! ”

the jury shouted.

Torturetail cleared his throat. “The last question is worth one million dollars,” he said. “No rodent has ever answered the final question correctly before. It has five parts:

1. Who wrote the novel *Rattenstein*?
2. When was the author born and when did the author die?
3. When was the novel written and why?
4. What is the name of the mad scientist who creates the monster?
5. Where does the action take place?

You have one minute to give your answer, Mr. Stilton!”

I closed my eyes and tried to



**CONCENTRATE.** This question was harder than a block of stale cheddar! The drum pounded in my ears.

Dum . . . dum . . . dum . . .

As the head of a publishing company, I know a lot about books. But if I made even one mistake, I could bid my tail bye-bye!

"We're waiting, Stilton," Torturetail hissed.

It was now or never. I shouted out the answers.

**1.** The novel *Rattenstein* was written by Ratty Wollstonecraft Shelley!

**2.** She was born in 1797 and died in 1851!



**RATTENSTEIN**





3. Shelley began writing the novel in 1816. She was at a party with friends, and everyone was telling scary stories. This gave her the idea for a monster created by a mad scientist!
4. The mad scientist's name was Victor Rattenstein!
5. The action takes place in Ingolstadt, in Bavaria, which is in southern Germany!

The studio went totally quiet.

The drumming stopped.

Torturetail looked up at the director. The director **FROWNED** and shrugged. Torturetail turned back to the audience.

"The answer to the final question is . . . correct!" Torturetail choked on the last word.

The audience **cheered**. The jury jeered. Shif T. Paws raced up to me and



gave me a hug. *"you won a  
million dollars,  
Stilton!"*

he cried.

I was so relieved. I felt like a puddle of nacho cheese sauce that has melted in the hot sun.

My tail was safe . . . and so was *The Rodent's Gazette!*





# THE MYSTERIOUS RAT IS . . .

The two stocky rats let me out of the trap. Torturetail reluctantly pushed in a wheelbarrow filled with gold coins. Shif T. Paws **happily** took the wheelbarrow from him.

“When you get right down to it, being on *The Mousetrap* was a big success!” he cried.





An armored truck took us back to 85 Curds Court. The morning sun was just rising, but a crowd of reporters had gathered at the door. They began **shouting** questions.

“Mr. Stilton, are you happy you saved your tail?”

“Tell us, were you nervous?”

“Mr. Stilton, would you do it again?”

I did a victory lap through the crowd. **“NOT FOR A MILLION POUNDS OF CHEDDAR!”** I squeaked.

Shif T. Paws and I went inside the bakery, slamming the door behind us. Bagel Buckwheat approached us, carrying a large cheese pizza. He had written a message in anchovies:

**Well done, Stilton!**

I was touched. “Thank you, Bagel,” I said.





“You are a true friend.”

Thea ran up, waving a piece of paper.

“I’ve discovered the identity of the mysterious rat,” she announced. “It’s—”

**“WHO IS IT?”** I squeaked.

**“WHAT IS HIS NAME?”** Shif T. asked.

“Tell us! Tell us!” shouted the staff.

Thea smiled. “The mysterious one-eyed rat is named **Flusher Pottypaws**,” she said. “Until three days ago, he owned a company that made sanitary fittings.”

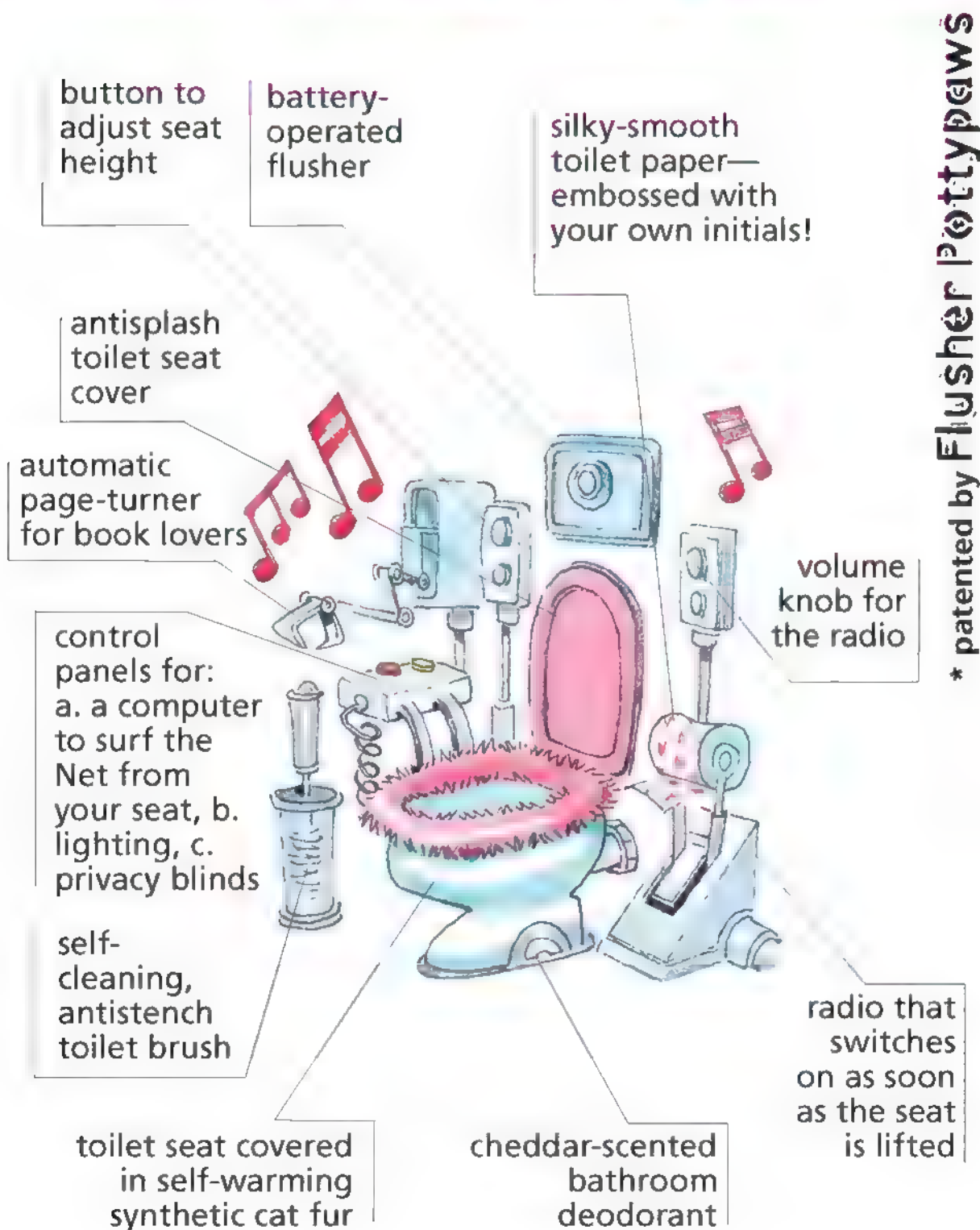
“Sanitary fittings?” Mousella repeated. She looked puzzled.

“That’s toilets to you and me,” said Thea, grinning.

*“That figures!”* Shif T. Paws said.

**“Pottypaws** started his company thirty years ago,” Thea continued. “He is very, very rich. He invented a one-of-a-kind

# The New *Bestbottom*<sup>\*</sup> Toilet for the Mouse with Class!





toilet with a warmed-up seat.”

“That’s right!” I shouted. “I’ve seen the ads for Pottypaws toilets.”

I **picked up** the phone to give him a call. Then I changed my mind. “I want to go talk to him snout-to-snout!” I said.

I left Shif T. Paws to count the gold coins. Then I called a **TAXI** to take me to 17 Swiss Cheese Center. That used to be the address of *The Rodent’s Gazette*. Now it was the home of *The Roaring Rat*.

But not for long, I promised myself.

I had my tail. I had my staff. I had a million dollars.

That Flusher Pottypaws had better watch out!





# MR. FLUSHER POTTYPAWS

I rang the doorbell at 17 Swiss Cheese Center.

“Let me in!” I said forcefully. “My name is Stilton, *Geronimo Stilton*.”

The door buzzed open. I stormed down the hallway to my ex-office. Then I pushed open my office door.

A one-eyed rat sat behind the desk. He wore a **BLACK PATCH** on his other eye. It made him look like some kind of pirate. He was short and stocky, and his fur was shiny with *fur sei*. He wore a **STRIPED** suit and a shirt the color of *American cheese*. He smelled of expensive blue-cheese aftershave. He wore a



in it.  
diamond  
He wore a ring with a big

gold ring with a big diamond in it. His heavy gold watch was studded with diamonds, too. He looked like a big **show-off!**

Flusher Pottypaws growled at me. “By the stench of a thousand toilet brushes! What do you want?”

Pottypaws tried to look threatening, but he didn’t scare me. I had survived *The Mousetrap*, after all!

“My name is Stilton, *Geronimo Stilton*,” I said proudly. “I run *The Rodent’s Gazette*!”

**“Trumpeting toilets!”** he roared. “What are you doing here? This is no longer your office!”

I laughed. “I just won a million dollars. Now I, too, am very, very rich. You can’t

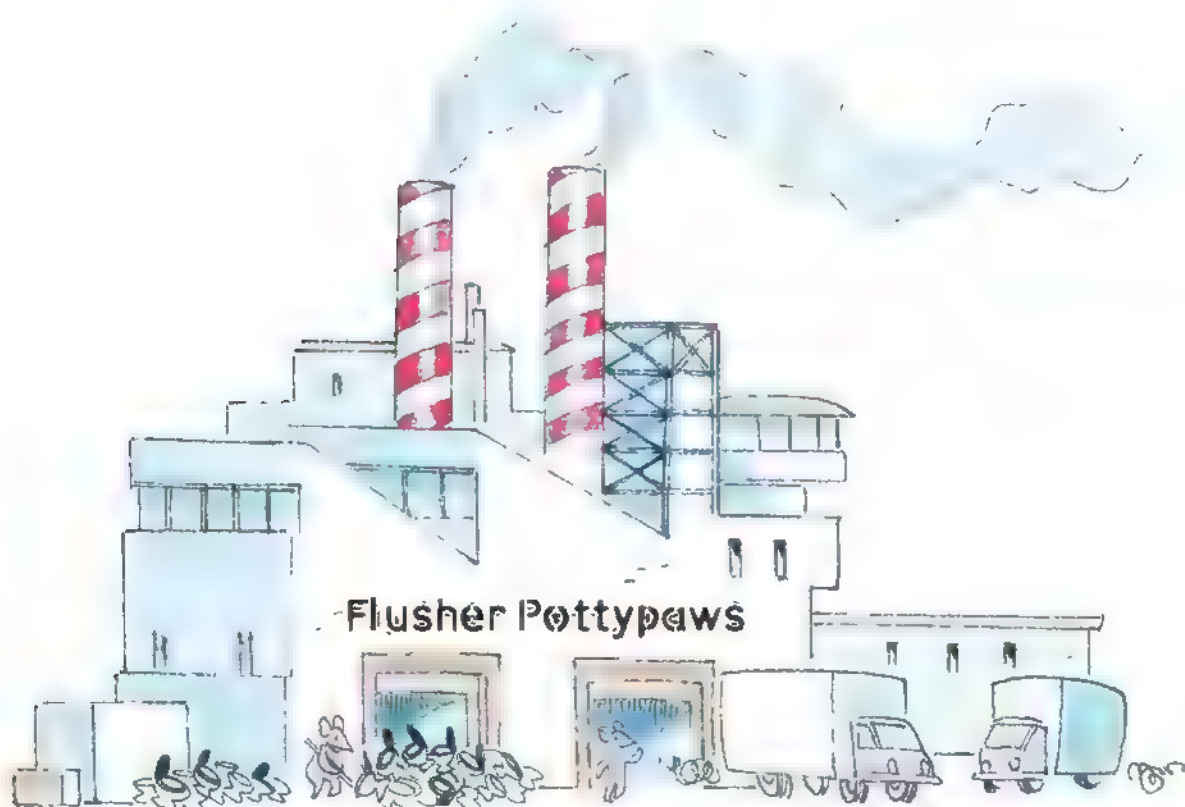




use your money to ruin **MY BUSINESS** anymore!”

Pottypaws glared at me. He looked like a tough rat. But I can be tough, too! I kept going. “This town is too small for the both of us, Pottypaws,” I said. “The fight is even now!”

Pottypaws turned **pale**. He suddenly looked **sad**.





“**NO**,” he said.

“**No, what?**” I asked.

He shook his head. “This fight is not even,” he said glumly.

I was puzzled. I was expecting more of a fight from this rat. “**Why Not?**” I asked.



Flusher Pottypaws



Pottypaws did not answer for a while. Then he rested his head on his desk and burst into tears. “This fight will never be even . . . because you are clever, and I don’t have what it takes to run a publishing house!”

Pottypaws sobbed and sobbed. He practically cried a river of tears. I couldn’t help it. I started to feel sorry for him!



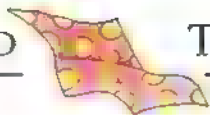
# SIGNED TOILET PAPER

Pottypaws kept **sobbing**. “I never went to college,” he said, weeping. “I’m a self-made mouse. I wanted to have a publishing company. I thought all you had to do was pay for it. But I was wrong.”

I walked up to him and put a paw on his shoulder. “Cheer up,” I said. “You *do* have a **newspaper**. **THE ROARING RAT!**”

Pottypaws opened a drawer in his desk. He took out some papers filled with numbers.

“Take a look at this!” he said. “The newsdealers are returning all of my newspapers. The bookstores are returning all of my books. The readers only want *The*



*Rodent's Gazette* and Stilton Publishing!"

Pottypaws began to sob again. I looked at the list of books put out by The Roaring Rat Group. I understood why the public didn't like them. The titles were horrible!

I **took pity** on poor Pottypaws. "It's not your fault you didn't succeed," I told him.







“You can’t become a publisher overnight. It took me twenty years to learn the business. I was only thirteen when my grandfather began taking me to book fairs.”

Pottypaws blew his snout into a big **RED** pawkerchief with yellow dots. “You’re just



saying that to cheer me up,” he said. “I’m an ignorant mouse. A loser. A **THIRD-RAT** rodent.”

I hate to see a mouse get down on himself. “Come on, don’t cry!” I said. “**I’M SURE YOU’RE A FINE MOUSE!**”

“Easy for you to say,” Pottypaws grumbled. “Everyone on Mouse Island knows you. Your books are great. I’ve read every single one of them.”

He reached into his drawer again and took out one of my books: **Four Mice Deep in the Jungle.**

“Would you sign it for me?” he asked.

I thought about the perfect thing to write. Then I signed it:

*To my new friend, Flusher Pottypaws. May he soon be signing his own books!*



*I was only thirteen when my grandfather  
began taking me to book fairs.*



He sighed. "Thank you, Mr. Stilton. But I'm afraid the best I can ever hope for is to sign a roll of toilet paper!"

He sighed. "The best I can ever hope for is to sign a roll of toilet paper!"  
toilet paper!  
toilet paper!  
toilet paper!



# FIRST-RAT ART

Pottypaws was so grateful, he offered to give our offices back to us. I called Mousella, who was **happy** to hear the news.

“That’s wonderful, Mr. Stilton!” she said. “I’ll tell the others!”

Moments later, I heard a shout. “Watch your whiskers, here comes Shif T. Paws!”

I knew what was coming.

But the door flew open before I could move out of the way. *Splat!* The door slammed into me once again.

Shif T. Paws **burst** into



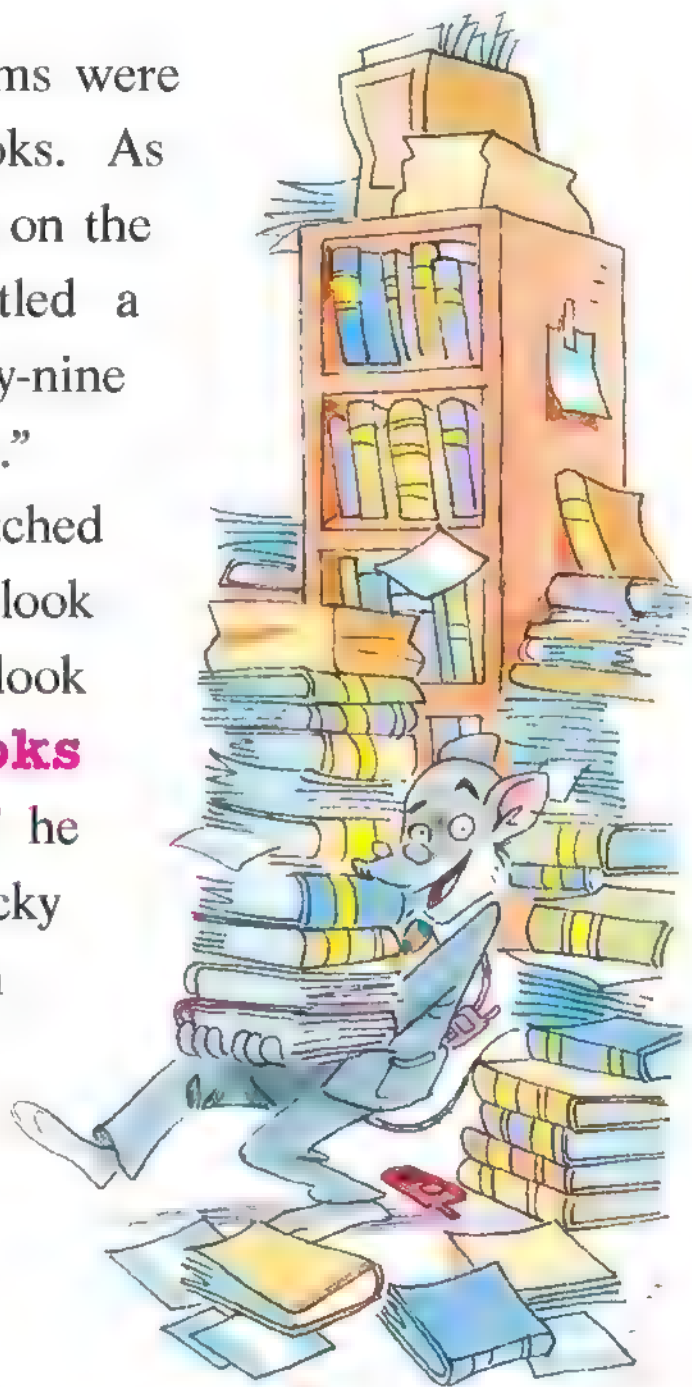




the room. His arms were loaded with books. As he put them back on the shelves, he whistled a happy tune: “Ninety-nine Morsels of Cheese.”

Pottypaws watched Shif T. with a sad look on his face. “Just look at all of your **books** and **newspapers**,” he said. “You are lucky to have such an interesting job. All I ever get to deal with are flushers and toilet seats.”

“But you make





lots of money doing it!” I pointed out.

He shook his head. “There are things money can’t buy, Stilton. Like culture, for example.”

Suddenly, I heard cries outside the window. I looked out to see a crowd of rodents. They were all shouting,

**“WE WANT THE RODENT’S  
GAZETTE! WE WANT THE  
RODENT’S GAZETTE!”**

I smiled. “You want the newspaper?” I shouted back. “Then you shall have it! As of tomorrow, everything is back to normal. You will find *The Rodent’s Gazette* on newsstands! You will find Stilton Publishing’s books in every bookstore!”

The crowd cheered. “Hurrah for *The Rodent’s Gazette*!”

I turned back to the office and saw



*We want The Rodent's Gazette!*



Pottypaws standing in the corner. He looked like he was going to cry again.

Shif T. Paws must have noticed, too. He ran up to me, his eyes glittering with excitement. “Stilton, I have a **brilliant idea!**” he said. “When you get right down to it, why don’t you two open a publishing house together? You can provide your experience, and Pottypaws can provide the money. You can put out art books.”

Pottypaws **brightened** up. “I love it! And I have a great idea for a name. We can call it **Toilet Art.**”

“That’s not bad,” I said, trying to be nice. “But maybe we should go with a more classic name. Like . . . **First-rat Art.**”

“Great!” Pottypaws cried. He crushed me in a tight **HUG**. Then he leaned out the window and shouted, “I have a publishing



house, too! Me, Flusher Pottypaws!”

The crowd stared up at him, bewildered.

“It’s called **First-rat Art!**” he continued.  
“I don’t want to brag, but we’re talking high culture here!”

The crowd was silent for a moment. Then they all shouted, “Yes! Hurrah for Flusher Pottypaws! Hurrah for **First-rat Art!**”







## MAKE A NOTE OF THAT, SCRIBBLESCRATCH!

The next morning, I saw a new sign on the door of 17 Swiss Cheese Center:

**FIRST-RATART**

**SERIOUS ARTY-SMARTY ART BOOKS!**

Pottypaws was already settled in his new office, right next to mine. He was giving some notes to his secretary, *Scrawland Scribblescratch*. He is a gray rodent



with a bald head and thick glasses.

“Art! Yes, art!” Pottypaws was saying.

Scribblescratch was quickly writing down everything Pottypaws said. “Art. Yes, art!” the secretary murmured.

Just then, my Global Culture Consultant (GCC) walked past the office. He is *Mousias van Ratén*, the uncle of my assistant editor, Pinky Pink.

Have you met Mousias? I met him during one of my many adventures. He’s been a good friend of mine ever since. However, our ideas on books are as different as blue cheese and Monterey jack. He thinks every book needs to be Intellectual with a capital **I**.

Mousias **stopped in the doorway**. “Excuse me, but I believe that Art should always have a capital **A**!” he said in a thundering voice.



Pottypaws nodded. “Rumbling rest rooms, you’re right! Lets fix that, Scribblescratch. Art with a capital **A**.”

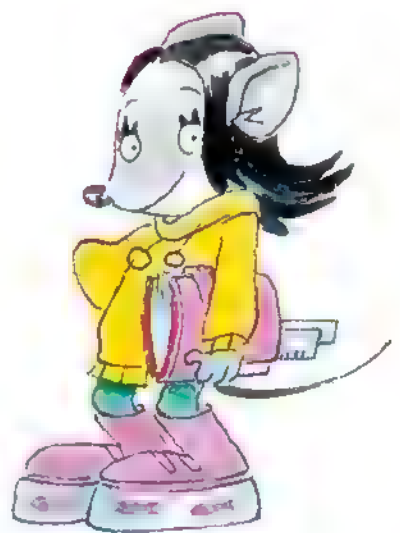
Scribblescratch sighed. “Art with a capital **A**.”

Mousias grinned and walked into my office.

**“HOLEY CHEESE!”**



*Mousias van Raten*



**Pinky Pick**



At long last, there is someone in this office who cares about Culture with a capital **C**. A true Intellectual—with a capital **I**!”

Pottypaws looked as pleased as a shopper who’s just found out there’s a half-price sale on cheese. “Me? An Intellectual with a capital **I**? Why not? Let’s talk about it.”

Mousias saw his chance. “I have lots of Ideas, you know, for some really Artistic, Intellectual books!”

Pottypaws waved his paw at me. “Come and listen to this smart rodent’s **I**deas with me, Stilton!”

But I had already *slunk off*.



# RECOLLECTIONS OF A RAT

Six months later, I heard a car horn outside my home. It was seven o'clock at night.

I looked out the window. A limousine the color of cheese was parked on the street. A mouse wearing a **striped suit** was leaning out the window. It was Flush Pottypaws, of course!

"Come on down, Stilton, it's late!" he called up. "It's time for the exhibit of **Impressionable** paintings. And after that, there's the **robin music** concert!"

I went downstairs and got in the car. "I hope you don't mind me correcting you," I squeaked. "But the paintings are called





*I went downstairs and got in the car.*



Impressionist, not *Impressionable*. And it's chamber music, not *room music*."

Pottypaws raised his **BUSHY** eyebrows. "Prancing plungers, I didn't know that!" he thundered. Then he shouted to his secretary in the front seat. "Make a note of that, *Scribblescratch!*"

"Right away, sir," Scribblescratch said.

Pottypaws chuckled and nudged me with his elbow. "At this rate, I'll soon be a truly Intellectual mouse," he said. "I'm already writing my autobiography. I think I'll call it *Recollections of a Rat!*"

Pottypaws got a *dreamy* look on his face. "I could print the whole thing on a single roll of toilet paper! That way you can read it one piece at a time, tearing off a piece as you go! We could get a toilet paper



*"I could print the whole thing on a single roll of toilet paper! That way you can read it one piece at a time, tearing off a piece as you go!"*

company to sponsor us.

**Fluffybottom,**

maybe. What do you think?"

Before I could answer, he **ROARED** at his secretary.

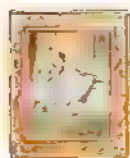
"Make a note of that, Scribblescratch!"



**Scrawland  
Scribblescratch**

Pottypaws turned back to me. "So, what do you think, Partner?"

I didn't want to tell Pottypaws what I really thought of his stinky idea. "I'll, uh, think about it," I said. "It certainly is . . . original!"



Then we reached the exhibit of paintings.  
*We got out* of the limousine and  
went to the art gallery. *First-rat Art* had  
organized a *party* to kick off the exhibit.

Pottypaws was thrilled to be there. "I am  
Flusher Pottypaws, from the *First-rat Art*  
group!" he announced.

He began shaking hands with all of the  
reporters and art critics. "Hi, there! How are





you? *IF I DO SAY SO MYSELF, IT DOESN'T STINK!* Ha, ha, ha.”

After a while, he came up to me. “Thank you, Geronimo. I am so happy to be involved in publishing. You have made my wish come *true*. You are a true friend!”

I was impressed. Maybe Pottypaws really can become an Intellectual mouse—with a capital **I**.







*Maybe he can become an Intellectual mouse. . . .*



Just then, I heard a cry.

“Watch your whiskers,  
here comes  
Shif T. Paws!”

This time, I scurried out of the way as fast as I could. The door opened . . . and missed me!

“Hey, there, Stilton,” Shif T. said, shaking my paw. “It’s been great working with you.”

“It’s nice to work with you, too, Shif T.,” I said, *smiling*.

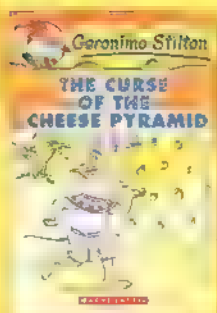
I really meant it. Everything had turned out fine . . . thanks to Shif T. Paws!



**Don't miss  
any of my  
fabumouse  
adventures!**



**#1 Lost Treasure  
of the Emerald Eye**



**#2 The Curse  
of the Cheese  
Pyramid**



**#3 Cat and  
Mouse in a  
Haunted House**



**#4 I'm Too Fond  
of My Fur!**



**#5 Four Mice  
Deep in the Jungle**



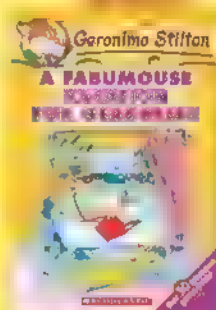
**#6 Paws Off,  
Cheddarface!**



**#7 Red Pizzas for  
a Blue Count**



**#8 Attack of the  
Bandit Cats**



**#9 A Fabumouse  
Vacation for  
Geronimo**



**#10 All Because of  
a Cup of Coffee**



**#11 It's  
Halloween, You  
'Fraidy Mouse!**



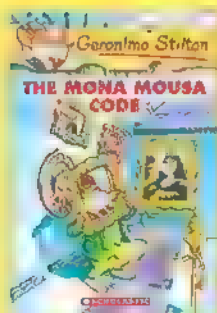
**#12 Merry  
Christmas,  
Geronimo!**



**#13 The Phantom  
of the Subway**



**#14 The Temple of  
the Ruby of Fire**



**#15 The Mona  
Mousa Code**



**#16 A Cheese-  
Colored Camper**



**#17 Watch Your  
Whiskers, Stilton!**



**#18 Shipwreck on  
the Pirate Islands**



**#19 My Name Is  
Stilton, Geronimo  
Stilton**





**#20 Surf's Up,  
Geronimo!**



**#21 The Wild,  
Wild West**



**#22 The Secret  
of Cacklefur  
Castle**



**A Christmas Tale**



**#23 Valentine's  
Day Disaster**



**#24 Field Trip to  
Niagara Falls**



**#25 The Search  
for Sunken  
Treasure**



**#26 The Mummy  
with No Name**



**#27 The  
Christmas Toy  
Factory**



**#28 Wedding  
Crasher**



**#29 Down and  
Out Down Under**



**#30 The Mouse  
Island Marathon**



**#31 The  
Mysterious  
Cheese Thief**



**Christmas  
Catastrophe**



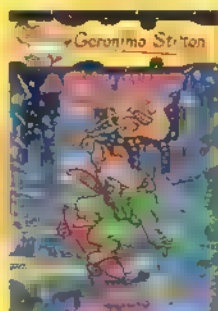
**#32 Valley of the  
Giant Skeletons**



**#33 Geronimo  
and the Gold  
Medal Mystery**



**#34 Geronimo  
Stilton, Secret  
Agent**



**#35 A Very Merry  
Christmas**



**#36 Geronimo's  
Valentine**

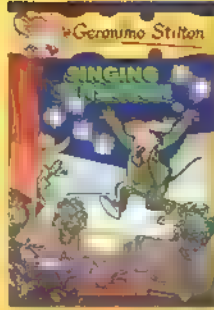


**#37 The Race  
Across America**





**#38 A Fabumouse School Adventure**



**#39 Singing Sensation**



**#40 The Karate Mouse**



**#41 Mighty Mount Kilimanjaro**



**#42 The Peculiar Pumpkin Thief**



**#43 I'm Not a Supermouse!**



**#44 The Giant Diamond Robbery**



**#45 Save the White Whale!**



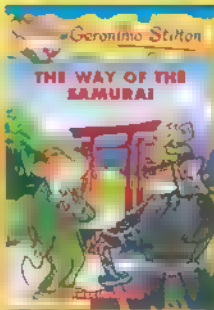
**#46 The Haunted Castle**



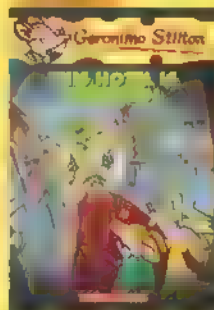
**#47 Run for the Hills, Geronimo!**



**#48 The Mystery in Venice**



**#49 The Way of the Samurai**



**#50 This Hotel Is Haunted**



**#51 The Enormouse Pearl Heist**



**#52 Mouse in Space!**



**#53 Rumble in the Jungle**



**#54 Get into Gear, Stilton!**



**#55 The Golden Statue Plot**



**#56 Flight of the Red Bandit**



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The Hunt for the Golden Book**



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these exciting  
Thea Sisters  
adventures!**



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Dragon's Code**



**Thea Stilton and the  
Mountain of Fire**



**Thea Stilton and the  
Ghost of the Shipwreck**



**Thea Stilton and the  
Secret City**



**Thea Stilton and the  
Mystery in Paris**



**Thea Stilton and the  
Cherry Blossom Adventure**



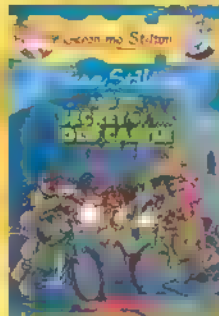
**Thea Stilton and the  
Star Castaways**



**Thea Stilton: Big Trouble  
in the Big Apple**



**Thea Stilton and the  
Ice Treasure**



**Thea Stilton and the  
Secret of the Old Castle**



**Thea Stilton and the  
Blue Scarab Hunt**



**Thea Stilton and the  
Prince's Emerald**



**Thea Stilton and the Mystery  
on the Orient Express**



**Thea Stilton and the  
Dancing Shadows**



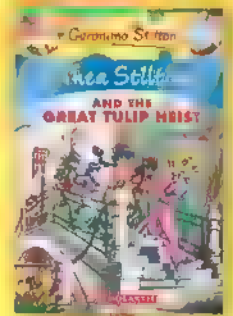
**Thea Stilton and the  
Legend of the Fire  
Flowers**



**Thea Stilton and the  
Spanish Dance Mission**



**Thea Stilton and the  
Journey to the Lion's Den**



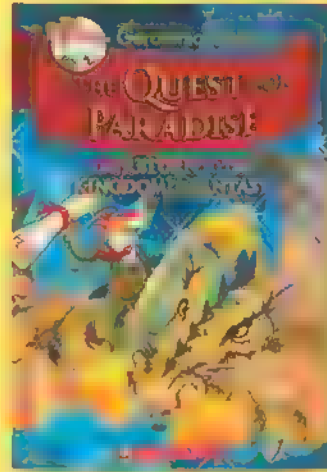
**Thea Stilton and the  
Great Tulip Heist**



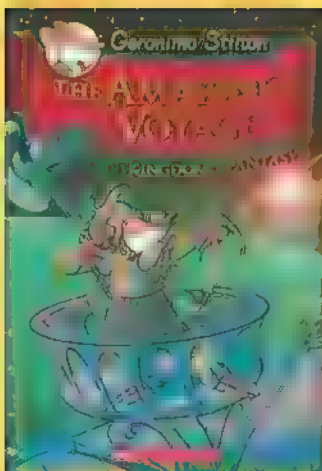
Be sure  
to read all  
my adventures  
in the Kingdom  
of Fantasy!



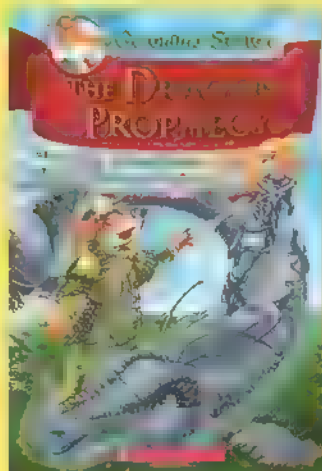
**THE KINGDOM  
OF FANTASY**



**THE QUEST FOR  
PARADISE:  
THE RETURN TO THE  
KINGDOM OF FANTASY**



**THE AMAZING  
VOYAGE:  
THE THIRD ADVENTURE  
IN THE KINGDOM  
OF FANTASY**



**THE DRAGON  
PROPHECY:  
THE FOURTH ADVENTURE  
IN THE KINGDOM  
OF FANTASY**



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OF FIRE:  
THE FIFTH ADVENTURE  
IN THE KINGDOM  
OF FANTASY**





Check out  
these very  
special editions  
featuring me  
and the Thea  
Sisters!



THE JOURNEY  
TO ATLANTIS



THE SECRET OF  
THE FAIRIES



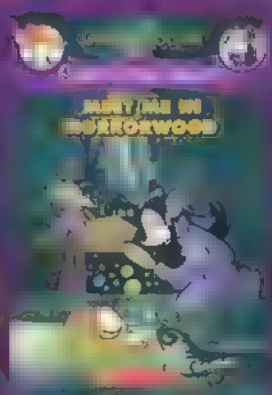
Meet

# CREEPELLA VON CACKLEFUR

I, *Geronimo Stilton*, have a lot of mouse friends, but none as **spooky** as my friend **CREEPELLA VON CACKLEFUR**! She is an enchanting and **MYSTERIOUS** mouse with a pet bat named **Bitewing**. I'm a real **scary** mouse, but even I think **CREEPELLA** and her family are **absolutely** fascinating. I can't wait for you to read all about **CREEPELLA** in these **famous** and **spectacularly spooky** tales!



1 The Thirteen Ghosts



2 Meet Me in Horrorwood



3 Ghost Pirate Treasure



4 Return of the Vampire



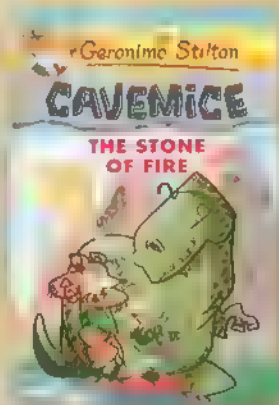
5 Fright Night



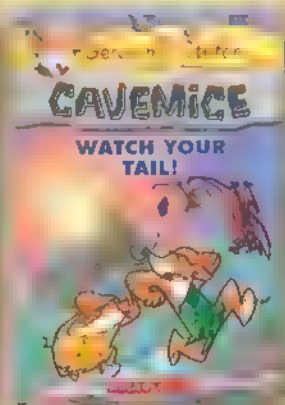


# Meet **GERONIMO STILTONOOT**

He is a cavemouse — Geronimo Stilton's ancient ancestor! He runs the stone newspaper in the prehistoric village of Old Mouse City. From dealing with dinosaurs to dodging meteorites, his life in the Stone Age is full of adventure!



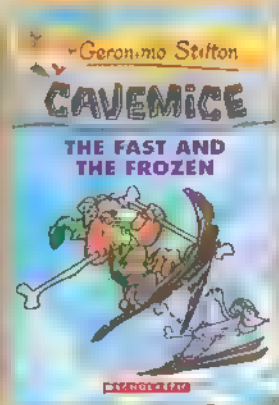
#1 The Stone of Fire



#2 Watch Your Tail!



#3 Help, I'm in Hot Lava!



#4 The Fast and the Frozen





Join me and my friends on  
a journey through time in  
this very special edition!



THE JOURNEY  
THROUGH TIME

# ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Born in New Mouse City, Mouse Island, **GERONIMO STILTON** is Rattus Emeritus of Mousomorphic Literature and of Neo-Ratonic Comparative Philosophy. For the past twenty years, he has been running *The Rodent's Gazette*, New Mouse City's most widely read daily newspaper.

Stilton was awarded the Ratitzer Prize for his scoops on *The Curse of the Cheese Pyramid* and *The Search for Sunken Treasure*. He has also received the Andersen 2000 Prize for Personality of the Year. One of his bestsellers won the 2002 eBook Award for world's best ratlings' electronic book. His works have been published all over the globe.

In his spare time, Mr. Stilton collects antique cheese rinds and plays golf. But what he most enjoys is telling stories to his nephew Benjamin.





1. Main entrance
2. Printing presses (where the books and newspaper are printed)
3. Accounts department
4. Editorial room (where the editors, illustrators, and designers work)
5. Geronimo Stilton's office
6. Helicopter landing pad

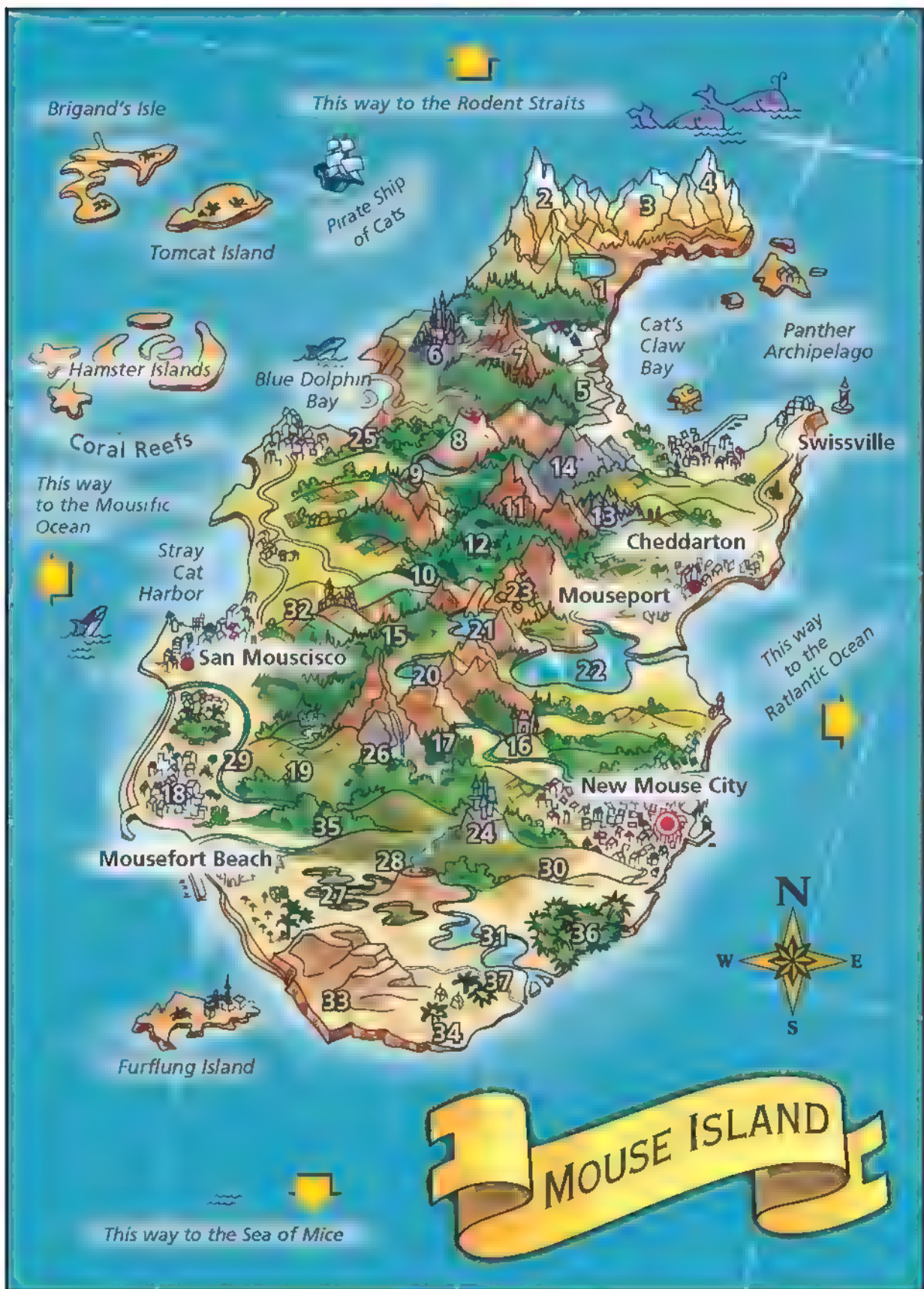
*THE RODENT'S  
GAZETTE*





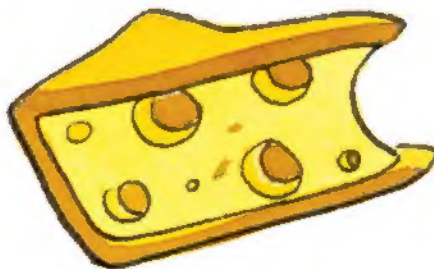
# Map of New Mouse City

1. Industrial Zone
2. Cheese Factories
3. Angorat International Airport
4. WRAT Radio and Television Station
5. Cheese Market
6. Fish Market
7. Town Hall
8. Snotnose Castle
9. The Seven Hills of Mouse Island
10. Mouse Central Station
11. Trade Center
12. Movie Theater
13. Gym
14. Catnegie Hall
15. Singing Stone Plaza
16. The Gouda Theater
17. Grand Hotel
18. Mouse General Hospital
19. Botanical Gardens
20. Cheap Junk for Less (Trap's store)
21. Aunt Sweetfur and Benjamin's House
22. Museum of Modern Art
23. University and Library
24. *The Daily Rat*
25. *The Rodent's Gazette*
26. Trap's House
27. Fashion District
28. The Mouse House Restaurant
29. Environmental Protection Center
30. Harbor Office
31. Mousidon Square Garden
32. Golf Course
33. Swimming Pool
34. Tennis Courts
35. Curlyfur Island Amusement Park
36. Geronimo's House
37. Historic District
38. Public Library
39. Shipyard
40. Thea's House
41. New Mouse Harbor
42. Luna Lighthouse
43. The Statue of Liberty
44. Hercule Poirat's Office
45. Petunia Pretty Paws's House
46. Grandfather William's House



# Map of Mouse Island

- |                           |                                    |
|---------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1. Big Ice Lake           | 21. Lake Lakelake                  |
| 2. Frozen Fur Peak        | 22. Lake Lakelakelake              |
| 3. Slipperyslopes Glacier | 23. Cheddar Crag                   |
| 4. Coldcreeps Peak        | 24. Cannycat Castle                |
| 5. Ratzikistan            | 25. Valley of the Giant<br>Sequoia |
| 6. Transratania           | 26. Cheddar Springs                |
| 7. Mount Vamp             | 27. Sulfurous Swamp                |
| 8. Roastedrat Volcano     | 28. Old Reliable Geyser            |
| 9. Brimstone Lake         | 29. Vole Vale                      |
| 10. Poopedcat Pass        | 30. Ravingrat Ravine               |
| 11. Stinko Peak           | 31. Gnat Marshes                   |
| 12. Dark Forest           | 32. Munster Highlands              |
| 13. Vain Vampires Valley  | 33. Mousehara Desert               |
| 14. Goose Bumps Gorge     | 34. Oasis of the<br>Sweaty Camel   |
| 15. The Shadow Line Pass  | 35. Cabbagehead Hill               |
| 16. Penny Pincher Castle  | 36. Rattytrap Jungle               |
| 17. Nature Reserve Park   | 37. Rio Mosquito                   |
| 18. Las Ratayas Marinas   |                                    |
| 19. Fossil Forest         |                                    |
| 20. Lake Lake             |                                    |



Dear mouse friends,  
Thanks for reading, and farewell  
till the next book.  
It'll be another whisker-licking-good  
adventure, and that's a promise!



Geronimo Stilton







**GERONIMO STILTON**



**THEA**



**TRAP**



**BENJAMIN**

## **Who is Geronimo Stilton?**

That's me! I run a newspaper, but my true passion is writing adventure stories. Here in New Mouse City, the capital of Mouse Island, my books are all bestsellers! My stories are funny, fa-mouse-ly funny. They are whisker-licking-good tales, and that's a promise!

---

## **WATCH YOUR WHISKERS, STILTON!**

Cheesecake! A mysterious one-eyed rat was trying to steal *The Rodent's Gazette* from under my snout! There was only one mouse who could save the paper—Shif T. Paws, my crafty business manager. Shif booked me onto the infamous TV game show *The Mousetrap*. If I won, *The Rodent's Gazette* would be saved. But if I lost—SQUEAK!—those scary TV rats would chop off my tail!

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